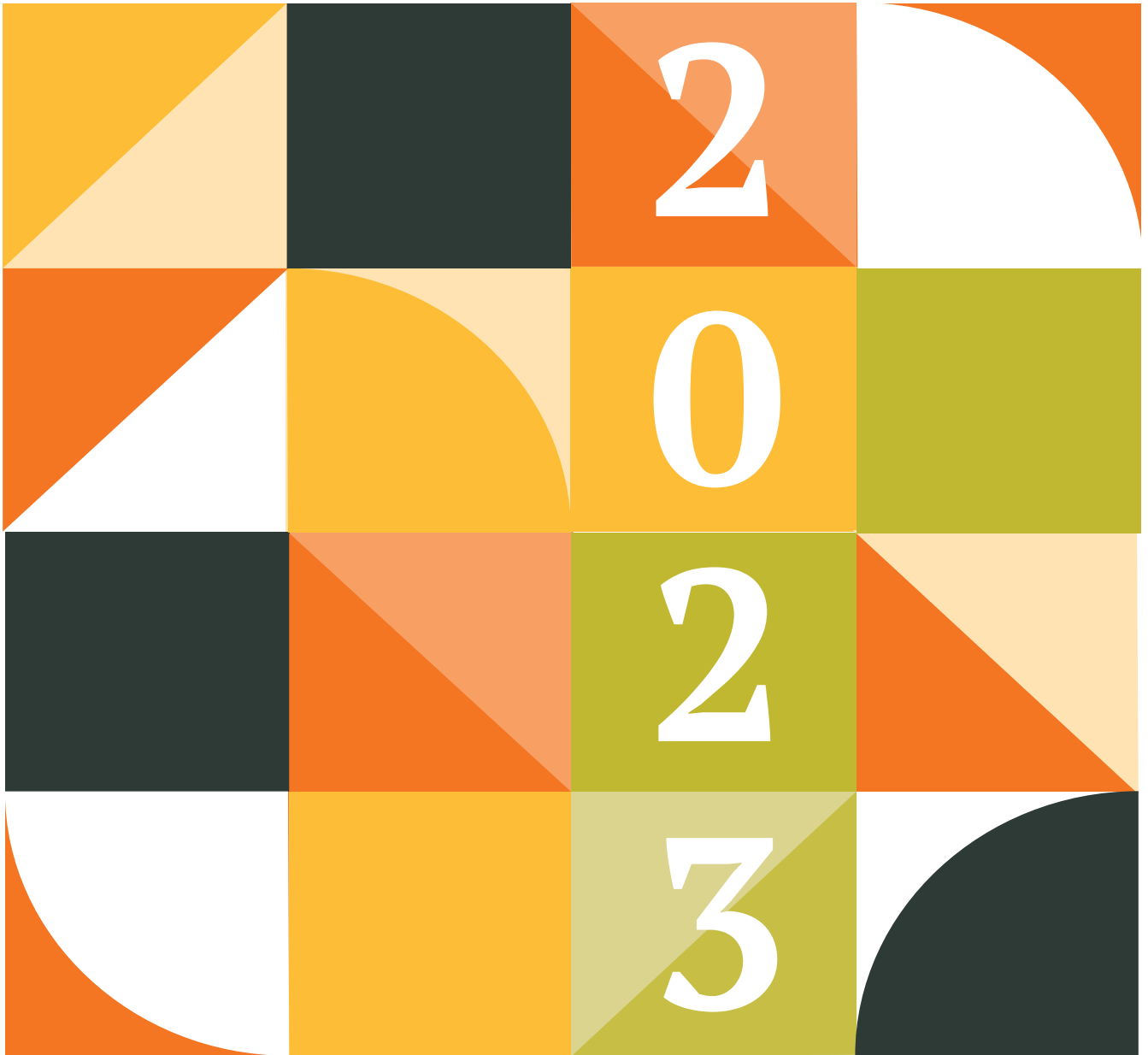


Coimisiún
na Meán



Work Programme

June 2023

Introduction

Coimisiún na Meán was established in March this year, when we assumed the staff and the functions of the Broadcasting Authority of Ireland. The publication of our first work programme is an important milestone for Coimisiún na Meán. Our mission is to ensure a thriving, diverse and safe online and media landscape. Our work programme reflects that commitment.

Our objectives for the year ahead include:

- ▶ Implementing new regulatory regimes for how online service providers deal with harmful and illegal content
- ▶ Regulating broadcasting and on-demand services
- ▶ Supporting the development of the wider media sector with funding schemes, together with initiatives to promote the Irish language, media literacy, as well as equality, diversity and inclusion in the media sector
- ▶ Building the Coimisiún na Meán organisation

The work programme runs until next February, when we will begin enforcement of the EU's Digital Services Act in addition to the functions we already have under the Broadcasting Act 2009 and the Online Safety and Media Regulation Act 2022.

The Commissioners act as a collegiate leadership and decision-making body for Coimisiún na Meán. Each of my colleagues leads on a particular area of work – Broadcasting/Video on Demand (VOD), Media Development, Online Safety and the Digital Services Act. But we take the big decisions jointly. This ensures a plurality of voices and opinions at the decision-making table and a combined and collegiate leadership approach to what we do.

It has been an exciting 3 months since our establishment. There is much to do, and the clock is ticking.

Online Safety

The objective of our work in Online Safety is to reduce the risk of harmful and illegal online content. Online services cut across borders, so it requires an international effort to keep users safe and protect them from harmful and illegal content.

Coimisiún na Meán has responsibility for regulating the many large online platforms and search engines that have established their European headquarters in Ireland.

We work closely with our counterparts in other EU Member States and with the European Commission to protect the interests of users across the EU in relation to platforms based in Ireland, and to protect the interests of Irish users in relation to platforms based elsewhere.

This year, we will focus on implementing two pieces of EU law in relation to harmful and illegal content. First, we will adopt an online safety code which will set out specific requirements for video-sharing platforms. This code will include measures that video-sharing platforms must take to address matters such as the protection of minors from harmful video content, hate speech directed against groups with protected characteristics, and criminal offences, including those related to terrorism, child sex abuse material and racism.

We will shortly issue a call for inputs about the online safety code and will consult on a draft code later in the year. We will also designate video-sharing platforms as defined by the EU's Audiovisual Media Services Directive and will make the code binding on them.

In addition, we will prepare for our role enforcing the new EU Digital Services Act. This sets rules that platforms must follow. These rules include requirements about how platforms handle complaints about harmful and illegal content, a prohibition on manipulative user interfaces, requirements for a high level of protection for children and so forth.

Very large online platforms and search engines must also address the risk of a wider variety of harms, including gender-based violence, disinformation, hate speech, and serious consequences for any person's physical or mental wellbeing. They must also provide access to data to vetted researchers, who can monitor the effectiveness of the measures they take.

The European Commission has identified 19 very large platforms and search engines which are subject to these obligations, 11 of which have their European headquarters in Ireland. Coimisiún na Meán will assist the European Commission in the implementation of these obligations by the very large Irish-based providers.



Broadcasting and Video-On-Demand

High-quality public service, commercial and community broadcasting and high-quality public service content are a core component of a healthy media landscape. The regulatory work in relation to broadcasting formerly conducted by the BAI continues within Coimisiún na Meán and our brief has expanded to cover all audio-visual services.

We will establish a new scheme for determining broadcasting and video-on-demand (VOD) complaints, and we will update and implement new media service codes and rules to ensure a safe and accessible audio-visual environment. A register of VOD services established in Ireland will be published. We will also engage with broadcasters in undertaking a 5-Year Review of funding for public service broadcasting in Ireland.

Our work plan also commits to exploring the feasibility of a new national radio station, including the possibility of an Irish-language youth radio station.

Prominence of public service content is a hot topic amongst broadcasters and concerns have been raised with us about the difficulties broadcasters face in ensuring that their content is easily available and visible on all platforms. We have new functions to help address this problem and in Q3 we will start to explore these issues and the steps that might be taken.



Media Development

This important area of our organisation operates funding schemes to support the development of content for Irish audiences that reflects and shapes Irish society. This includes:

- ▶ The Sound & Vision scheme, that supports the production of culturally valuable broadcast content, including in the Irish language
- ▶ Two new journalism schemes to support reporting of local courts and local democracy
- ▶ An archiving scheme to support the preservation of the historic record of Irish culture, heritage and experience

We will continue media development activities previously conducted by the BAI, including the implementation of a sectoral learning and development programme, the development of media literacy initiatives to assist the public to critically appraise online and broadcast content, and promotion of high standards of environmental practices in the media sector.

A long-awaited Gender, Equality, Inclusion and Diversity strategy for the media sector will be concluded by year-end also. This strategy will outline how a system of standards to ensure greater representation in these important areas across all media, could be adopted and operated.

Coimisiún na Meán promotes and supports the delivery of Irish language content for Irish audiences. A review of the provision of Irish language services across the media landscape, as recommended in the Future of Media Commission Report, will begin this year as well.

We also expect to begin exploring areas of closer co-operation between media organisations on both sides of the border in conjunction with the Shared Island Initiative. It is hoped to implement the FOMC recommendation that a working group be established with Sport Ireland to develop a strategic plan for sports broadcasting.



Building The Organisation

Coimisiún na Meán had around 40 staff when we were established three months ago. We have already grown to around 50, and we have approval to grow to around 160.

Our new organisation will include staff devoted to supervision of platforms and to formal investigations of suspected contraventions; staff devoted to regulatory policy and to making codes and rules; staff devoted to user support and to handling complaints; staff devoted to broadcasting regulation, media development and research; experts in data science; legal advisors; and support staff in areas such as finance, HR, IT and communications.

Following publication of our work plan, we are launching recruitment campaigns to start to fill these roles.

As well as recruitment, we will also be putting in place arrangements for an industry levy to fund our new responsibilities.

Conclusion

Properly functioning broadcast and online media are essential to everyone's fundamental rights in a democratic society. We look forward to closely collaborating with all stakeholders, both nationally and internationally, for the benefit of people in Ireland and across Europe. Ní neart go cur le chéile. Ar aghaidh linn.



Jeremy Godfrey
Executive Chairperson
Cathaoirleach Feidhmiúcháin



Coimisiún na Meán work programme – public deliverables and milestones

	Work stream	Online Safety and DSC	AVMS and Radio	Media Development	Coimisiún na Meán organisation
2023	Q2	<p>Online Safety Code (OSC): Call for inputs.</p> <p>Video Sharing Platforms (VSPS): Consultation on category designation.</p>		<p>Gender, Equality, Diversity & Inclusion Strategy: Tender for consultancy support to develop GEDI strategy.</p> <p>Sustainability: Review of carbon footprint calculator for AV productions.</p> <p>Archiving Scheme 3: Call for inputs.</p> <p>Sound & Vision: Open Funding Round: Call for applications.</p>	<p>Work Plan: Coimisiún na Meán first workplan.</p> <p>Advisory Committees: Established audit and risk committee.</p>
2023	Q3	<p>Online Safety Code (OSC): Consult on draft E-Commerce strategy.</p> <p>Online Safety Code (OSC): Consultation on draft OSC.</p> <p>Video Sharing Platforms (VSPS): Established category designation and send information requests for named service designations.</p> <p>Digital Services Coordinator: Engagement with stakeholders on DSA procedures and Policies.</p>	<p>Broadcasting licences: Renewal of existing broadcasting licenses.</p> <p>Broadcasting and VOD Complaints: New procedure for broadcasting and VOD complaints established.</p> <p>Video On-Demand Registration: Issued information requests, if required.</p> <p>Media service codes and rules: Consultation on changes to codes and rules, including those needed for VOD. Referendum Guidelines: Consultation and Guidelines Issued.</p>	<p>Gender, Equality, Diversity & Inclusion Strategy: Consultation on draft strategy</p> <p>European Works Levy: Consult on impact of potential approaches to the content Production levy.</p> <p>Media Fund Schemes: Consultation on detailed design of the Local Democracy And Courts Reporting Schemes.</p> <p>Sound & Vision: Commercial Radio Round: Call for applications.</p> <p>Media Literacy: Stakeholder Events.</p> <p>Review of the Provision of Irish Language Services: Update on process for Irish language review.</p>	<p>Work Plan: Updated 2023 workplan published.</p> <p>Advisory Committees: Established youth advisory committee.An Coimisiún Levy Model: Consultation on levy model design.</p> <p>Annual Report and Accounts: Final 14 ½ month annual report & accounts for BAI published.</p> <p>BAI Levy Model: Final BAI levy model reconciliation process for levy year 2022 conducted.</p>
2023	Q4	<p>Online Safety Code (OSC): E-Commerce compliance strategy adopted; Online Safety Codes adopted.</p> <p>Video Sharing Platforms (VSPS): Consultation and decisions on named service designations; publication of VSPS register.</p> <p>Digital Services Coordinator: Decisions on DSA procedures and policies.</p> <p>Terrorist Content Online Regulation: Consultation as required on procedures & guidelines.</p> <p>Online Safety / Digital Services Coordinator: Engagement with major platforms to establish. Monitoring and supervision arrangements.</p>	<p>5 Year Review of Public Funding PSM: Engagement with Public Service Broadcasters and Departments.</p> <p>Video On-Demand: Notification of registration decisions and first register published.</p> <p>Media service codes and rules: Implemented updated codes and rules.</p> <p>New quasi-national radio service: Update on feasibility study.</p>	<p>Gender, Equality, Diversity & Inclusion Strategy: GEDI Strategy published.</p> <p>Media Fund Schemes: Local democracy and court reporting schemes open to applicants, subject to approvals.</p> <p>Sound & Vision: Open Funding Round: Call for applications.</p> <p>Sectoral Development & Sponsorship: Applications for funding open.</p>	<p>Work Plan: Coimisiún na Meán 2024 workplan and estimates of income and expenditure for 2024 published.</p> <p>Advisory Committees: Established other priority advisory committees.</p> <p>An Coimisiún Levy Model: Levy order made.</p>
2024	Q1	<p>Digital Services Coordinator: By 17 February 2024, full implementation of procedures and capabilities for DSC responsibilities, including compliance monitoring, notices under Articles 9 and 10, vetted researchers, trusted flaggers, complaint handling, and out-of-court dispute resolution bodies.</p> <p>Terrorist Content Online Reporting: Implemented TCOR procedures & guidelines.</p>		<p>All-island Media Economy: Call for tender for research feasibility study to maximise collaboration across shared island.</p> <p>Sports Broadcasting: Stakeholder consultation on EDI standards and on strategic plan for sports broadcasting and promotion.</p> <p>Archiving Scheme: Funding Round: Call for applications.</p> <p>Sound & Vision: Social Benefit Community Radio Round: Call for applications.</p>	<p>Work Plan: Updated 2024 workplan published.</p> <p>An Coimisiún Levy Model: New levy payments started.</p>

Online safety & DSC

Q2

Q2 2023

Online Safety Code (OSC): Call for inputs

Video Sharing Platforms (VSPS):
Consultation on category designation

Q3

Q3 2023

Online Safety Code (OSC): Consult on draft E-Commerce strategy

Online Safety Code (OSC): Consultation on draft OSC

Video Sharing Platforms (VSPS): Established category designation and send information requests for named service designations

Digital Services Coordinator: Engagement with stakeholders on DSA procedures and Policies

Q4

Q4 2023

Online Safety Code (OSC): E-Commerce compliance strategy adopted; Online Safety Codes adopted

Video Sharing Platforms (VSPS): Consultation and decisions on named service designations; publication of VSPS register

Digital Services Coordinator: Decisions on DSA procedures and policies

Terrorist Content Online Regulation: Consultation as required on procedures & guidelines

Online Safety / Digital Services Coordinator: Engagement with major platforms to establish. Monitoring and supervision arrangements

Q1

Q1 2024

Digital Services Coordinator: By 17 February 2024, full implementation of procedures and capabilities for DSC responsibilities, including compliance monitoring, notices under Articles 9 and 10, vetted researchers, trusted flaggers, complaint handling, and out-of-court dispute resolution bodies

Terrorist Content Online Reporting: Implemented TCOR procedures & guidelines

AVMS & Radio

Q3

Q3 2023

Broadcasting licences: Renewal of existing broadcasting licenses

Broadcasting and VOD Complaints: New procedure for broadcasting and VOD complaints established

Video On-Demand Registration: Issued information requests, if required

Media service codes and rules: Consultation on changes to codes and rules, including those needed for VOD. Referendum Guidelines: Consultation and Guidelines Issued

Q4

Q4 2023

5 Year Review of Public Funding PSM: Engagement with Public Service Broadcasters and Departments

Video On-Demand: Notification of registration decisions and first register published

Media service codes and rules: Implemented updated codes and rules

New quasi-national radio service: Update on feasibility study



Media Development

Q2

Q2 2023

Gender, Equality, Diversity & Inclusion Strategy:

Tender for consultancy support to develop GEDI strategy

Sustainability: Review of carbon footprint calculator for AV productions

Archiving Scheme 3: Call for inputs

Sound & Vision: Open Funding Round: Call for applications

Q3

Q3 2023

Gender, Equality, Diversity & Inclusion Strategy:

Consultation on draft strategy

European Works Levy: Consult on impact of potential approaches to the content Production levy

Media Fund Schemes: Consultation on detailed design of the Local Democracy And Courts Reporting Schemes

Sound & Vision: Commercial Radio Round: Call for applications

Media Literacy: Stakeholder Events

Review of the Provision of Irish Language Services: Update on process for Irish language review

Q4

Q4 2023

Gender, Equality, Diversity & Inclusion Strategy:

GEDI Strategy published

Media Fund Schemes: Local democracy and court reporting schemes open to applicants, subject to approvals

Sound & Vision: Open Funding Round: Call for applications

Sectoral Development & Sponsorship: Applications for funding open

Q1

Q1 2024

All-island Media Economy: Call for tender for research feasibility study to maximise collaboration across shared island

Sports Broadcasting: Stakeholder consultation on EDI standards and on strategic plan for sports broadcasting and promotion

Archiving Scheme: Funding Round: Call for applications

Sound & Vision: Social Benefit Community Radio Round: Call for applications

Coimisiún na Meán organisation

Q2

Q2 2023

Work Plan:

Coimisiún na Meán first workplan

Advisory Committees:

Established audit and risk committee

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Q3

Q3 2023

Work Plan: Updated 2023 workplan published

Advisory Committees: Established youth advisory committee

An Coimisiún Levy Model: Consultation on levy model design

Annual Report and Accounts:

Final 14 ½ month annual report & accounts for BAI published

BAI Levy Model: Final BAI levy model reconciliation process for levy year 2022 conducted

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Q4

Q4 2023

Work Plan: Coimisiún na Meán 2024 workplan and estimates of income and expenditure for 2024 published

Advisory Committees: Established other priority advisory committees

An Coimisiún Levy Model: Levy order made

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Q1

Q1 2024

Work Plan: Updated 2024 workplan published

An Coimisiún Levy Model: New levy payments started

Coimisiún na Meán